(b) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI MULLAPPALLY RAMACHANDRAN): (a) Yes Sir.

(b) The Shrimp and Fish Culture Project approved by the World Bank in the meeting of the Executive Board of Directors held at Washington on 14.1.92 envisages development of about 1393 ha| brackishwater area in Nellore, Prakasam, Krishna and East Godavari districts and 15.300 ha. of reservoirs in 7 districts *viz.* Chittoor Karim nagar, Khammam, Krishna, Medak, Nellore and Nizamabad districts. The project will become credit effective from 1st May, 1992 for implementation over a 7 year period. The total estimated project cost in Andhra Pradesh is Rs. 88.13 crore. About 90 per cent of the total cost is expected to be provided by the World Bank as loan assistance.

International Rice Research Institute

4071. DR. NARREDDY THULASI REDDY: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that "International Rice Research Institute" has warned that the production of rice would decrease due to the gradual weakness of ozone layer; and

(b) if so, what steps Government are taking to meet the challenge?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI K. C. LENKA): (a) No, Sir.

(b) Does not arise.

Diseases from Pesticides Poisoning

4072. SHRI VIREN J. SHAH: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government's attention has been drawn to a report published in the Indian Express (Bombay) of 19th February, 1992 about the death of over 150 people in Basti District (U.P.) by consuming wheat contaminated by pesticides;

(b) whether it is a fact that a large number of cases of blindness, cancer deformities, diseases of liver and nervous system from pesticides poisoning have been identified in the cotton growing districts of Maharashtra and Andhra Pradesh;

(c) if so, what are the details of the cases and the compensation paid to the families of the victims; and

(d) what steps Government have taken to make the people aware about the hazardous effects of the pesticides?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI MULLAPPALLY RAMACHANDRAN): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) and (c) The information is being collected and would be laid on the table of the House.

(d) The Government has taken several steps to ensure that pesticides are safely handled and used. Some of the major steps taken are given below:

(i) The label and leaflets which inveriably accompany the pesticides container give directions on the usage, safety measures to be observed, first-aid measures and anticlotes to be used in case of accidental poisoning.

(ii) The extension functionaries impart training to farmers and other users on various aspects of pesticide handling and usage including precautions required to be observed.

(iii) The manufacturers of pesticides either individually or through the Associations also organise demonstrations and training programmes at various levels to advocate safe and judicious use of pesticides.

(iv) The Registration Committee set up under the Inseticides Act, 1968 registers pesticides only after evaluating their safety and efficacy.